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OFFICE OF THE WHITE HOUSE PRESS SECRETARY

THE WHITE HOUSE

REMARKS OF THE PRESIDENT
AT THE
SWEARING-IN CEREMONY
OF

VICE ADMIRAL WILLIAM F. RABORN (USN. Ret.)
AS DIRECTOR OF THE CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
AND

RICHARD HELMS
AS DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF THE CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

THE CABINET ROOM

(12:40 PM EDT)

Good morning ladies and gentlemen: Long ago in the infancy of this nation Americans were told that their liberty and the price of it was eternal vigilance. In this 20th century that truth is stronger than ever.

We live in a dangerous world, a world which cannot be predicted, a world which moves and is shaped by great forces, forces which we faithfully believe can serve for good as well as evil.

We were founded as a nation upon an ideal. All through the ages, Americans have been first and last idealists. Of all our generations none ever has been more truly idealistic than Americans of these times --without thought of gain, without thought of conquest, without wish for aggrandizement. We have committed our lives, our property, our resources and our sacred honor to the freedom and peace of other men, indeed to the freedom and peace of all mankind. We would dishonor that commitment, we would disgrace all the sacrifices Americans have made if we were not every hour of every day vigilant against every threat to peace and freedom. That is why we have the Central Intelligence Agency.

The purpose of this effort like the purpose of all that we do is to strive for an orderly, just and peaceful world. In this effort more than in many others a high order of selflessness, of dedication, of devotion, is asked of men and women. The compensation of them comes not in gain, certainly not in rewards of salary, but the reward of the sure knowledge they have made a contribution to freedom's cause.

For the leadership of this vital agency this nation has been very fortunate to have the services of outstanding Americans: Allen Dulles, John McCone, now today Admiral William F. Raborn. Both Mr. Dulles and Mr. McCone were Republicans. I have never inquired into the Admiral's politics but I have inquired and do know something of his talents and that is why he was selected for this particular task.

It was his phenomenal ability as a manager and as a leader and as an inspiration to his co-workers and as a dedicated patriotic man himself that gave America the great strength of the Polaris missile. His genius was proven in that task. It will now be tested in this new assignment that he has so willingly and voluntarily agreed to accept.

He follows a man who is hard to follow --Mr. John McCone. Mr. McCone has chosen to give this country some of the finest years of his life. We are greatly in his debt for all the public service that he has rendered to freedom in the field of military, the field of atomic energy, and most recently in the field of world intelligence. We shall miss him but we wish him Godspeed.

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Admiral Raborn's great strength as a leader and a manager is his respect and his reliance upon his co-workers. Admiral Raborn is a team-builder and he is a team-player. At the Central Intelligence Agency he will have as his strong right arm one of the most respected career professionals in the Capital of this great nation, Mr. Richard Helms.

Few career men in this government are as highly respected as Mr. Helms. I find food for thought in the fact that a man successful in Mr. Helms' present profession trained for this work in the paper profession, and Mr. Helms, if you need recruits, see me. I might recommend some of these in this room to you now.

But I am very proud of this team and I am proud we have been able in recent weeks to persuade many of our most outstanding career public servants to accept promotions and additional responsibilities in the government, to assume more vital roles. The high positions of this administration are being filled today, yesterday and tomorrow on the basis of merit without regard to politics, without regard to partisanship, and I hope this pattern can be permanent.

To Admiral Raborn, to Mr. Helms, I extend my congratulations.

To the other members of the Executive Branch, the State Department, the Pentagon and the other agencies who must work closely with these men, I extend my congratulations. All of you have my confidence to the fullest for the responsible undertakings that are ahead of you. Thank you very much.

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(12:46 PM EDT)